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E S S A Y
UPON
O E C O N O M Y.

THE FOURTH EDITION.

BY
EDWARD WATKINSON, M. D.
Rector of LITTLE CHART in KENT.

"He ruleth well his own House." 1 TIM. 3.



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ESSAYS

UPON

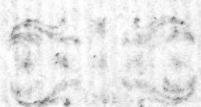
OF ECONOMY

THE FOURTH EDITION

BY

EDWARD WATKINSON, M.D.

REGENT OF THE HART IN KENT



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MDCCLXXII

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O E C O N O M Y ;

CONSIDERED UNDER

F O R E C A S T, Luke 14. 28.

O R D E R, John 20. 7.

P R U D E N C E. John 6. 12.

" *Gather up the Fragments that remain,
that nothing be lost.*"



THE Subject of the following Essay must be universally allowed to be important, however imperfectly handled.

Oeconomy is a comprehensive Word.

It includes all that provident Care, exact Uniformity, and prudent Conduct, so absolutely requisite in human Life. Let it not therefore be considered as something that relates only to one, and concerns not another ; for it is what the

meanest Station necessarily calls for, the most *Exalted* cannot dispense with.

Exodus 18.

Oeconomy is equally required in the *Cabinet* and in the *Field*; in *public*, in *private Life*; in the Support of *Government* itself*.

Oeconomy is not suited only to *particular Times*, *Circumstances*, and *Occasions*: It is *absolutely* requisite in *all* Situations; it is highly necessary to the sustaining *every* Character, to the Support of *every* Society, to the Interest of every *Individual* of the Community; the Affairs of the *State*, as well as the Concerns of the *Closet*. It is a *moral*, it is a *Christian* Virtue.

Oeconomy implies that *Uniformity*, *Propriety*, and *Consistency* of Conduct, which is seen thro' *every* Action—A Decorum in the Seasons of Relaxation, and in *every* Enjoyment—That Temper of Mind which is disposed to retrench *every* unnecessary Expence; and to improve *every* Acquisition to the Glory of the Giver,

* Here a *great Example* presents itself to you, of *One* of the most *illustrious* Personages in the *Kingdom*.—In his Way of Living, *temperate* and *regular*; inviolably preserving that *Propriety* of Character, which in Kings, who lead the Taste of the World, is a *distinguished* Virtue; and so *methodical* in every Branch of *Oeconomy*, that his *Attention* descends to *every* Object. In such an Age of *Dissipation* and *Extravagance*, what may not we hope from the happy Influence of *such* an Example?—From the Pattern of *One*, who, conscious of being the First in *Power*, is emulous of being the First in *Virtue*?

Ecclef. 10.
17.

“Blessed art thou, O Land! when, &c.”

your

[3]
your own Happiness, and that of your Fellow-Creatures.

Since then the *Subject* is so *important* in every Point of View, and *all* Persons are so deeply *interested* in it, it may not be an *useless* Task, (perhaps not an *unseasonable* one at this *Juncture*, when the dissolute *Maxims* of Luxury and Pleasure seem to be the *peculiar* and leading *Principle* of the *Times*) to enquire into the respective *Qualifications* requisite to form this GREAT CHARACTER.



FORECAST.

IF we look abroad into the World, and take a Survey of human Conduct in general, we shall find that a great many are reduced to Want through their own *Thoughtlessness*, *Irregularity*, and *Imprudence*. Hence it is, that we hear these “*Complainings* in our Streets;” so that we may well take up the Words of the wise Man, and say—“The *Foolishness* of *Man* perverteth “his Way, and his Heart fretteth against the “LORD.” Psal. 144. 1
Prov. 19.

Instead of tracing Effects from their *proper* Causes, and taking the Blame on *themselves*, as
A 3 they

Job 1.

they *ought*, they are too apt to repine, murmur, and “charge God foolishly.”

A *provident* Care for your *future* Welfare hath ever been esteemed one of the first and most distinguishing Marks of human *Wisdom*.

Joseph shewed his Sagacity in nothing more than in the discreet Advice which he gave to *Pharaoh*, to lay up in the seven *plenteous* Years for the seven ensuing ones of *Famine*; and it was this *Oeconomical* Counsel that so immediately *struck* the King—“Where shall we find
“such a one as this? A Man in whom is the
“Spirit of God?”

Gen. 41.

The Ant, (that seemingly *insignificant* Insect)
Prov. 6. is recommended to your Consideration, both by the sacred and profane Writers*, as a Pattern worthy of your Imitation for its *provident Fore-*
30. *cast*.

The *discreet* Person is described by *Solomon*, as
“*foreseeing* the Evil,” and then using proper
22. Means for the *Avoidance* of it.

Forecast is one distinguishing Characteristic of the wise Woman.—“She looketh well unto
“the Ways of her Household: She eateth not
“the Bread of Idleness; and previous to her
Prov. 31. “buying a Piece of Ground—she *considered*.”

The original Word is remarkably *expressive*.—
She revolved it well in her Mind; “in the Deep

* “Parvula (nam exemplo est) magni formica laboris

—“Haud ignara & non incauta futuri.”

HOR.

“of

“ of her Heart.” She gave herself Time to *reflect*, and to *deliberate* upon it, before she *put it in Execution*.

This was *her* Conduct, and that it may have its due Weight with People of all Ranks, (not excepting even the *highest Personages*) let it be remembred, that it was the *Conduct* of no less a Woman than the *Mother of King Lemuel*.

It was this *provident Forecast* in the Steward, which attracted the Admiration of his Lord; (for *so*, and in *this Sense only*, must those Words be understood—“ And the Lord *commended* the unjust Steward.” For what? for his being *provident*) the sagacious *Discernment* which he shewed for his *future* Support, had he used justifiable *Means*, was doubtless *laudable*. Luke 16.

The Events of this Life are fluctuating and precarious; ought not then some Provision to be made for *unforeseen* Losses? Ought you not to extend your Views further than the Supply of your *present* Wants? Ought you not to lay up something for *Futurity*?

To look no further than the *present* Moment; to live at random, secure, and careless of any *future* Exigencies; to concern yourselves about nothing but what is immediately *before* you; and in the Enjoyment of *To-day*, to take no manner of Thought for the *Morrow*, must inevitably be productive of the most fatal Consequences, not only to *yourselves*, but also to *Posterity*.

sternity. It entails Misery upon “Children that
 Psal. 78. “are yet *unborn*!”

In what lively Colours doth the wise Man
 paint this *too common* Error!—“He begetteth a
 Eccles. 5. “Son, and lo! there is *nothing* in his Hand!”

And St *Paul* himself avers, that “he hath
 “sunk even below Infidelity, who is negligent
 1 Tim. 5. “to *provide* for those of his own House.”

While you guard against an *anxious Solitude*
 — *Ægritudo animi* — *Μερίμνα*; (an Imputation
 very ill becoming a Christian) to *look forward*
 to the Consequences, to the Issue and Event of
 Things (as far as you are able) is such a Con-
 duct as *Reason* must naturally suggest, *Scripture*
 warrants, and *Religion* itself enjoins; such as a
 wise Man must approve of, and such as a good
 one cannot condemn.

“Reason bids you for *your own* provide.”

POPE.

Such a Share of Bliss and Happiness as this
 World *admits* of, undoubtedly Man may seek
 after; but *find* it he will not, enjoy it he can-
 not, without serious *Thought* and due *Reflexion*.
This the united Voice of Reason and Scripture
 calls for. *This* the Rotation and Vicissitude of
 all human Affairs requires; not only when you
 Ezek. 20. “pass under the Rod,” for then it is Compul-
 sion, it is Necessity drives you to it; but also
 “in

“ in the Day of Prosperity,” when Levity of Mind and Diffipation of Thought is apt to be too predominant : For that Laughter must certainly be mad, and that Mirth frantic, which is not restrained by *Thought*, and tempered with *Reflexion*. Is not *this* the most natural Use of Eccles. 2. that noble Faculty, by which you are distinguished from every other Part of the Creation ? It is by *this* you are enabled to determine what is best for you to do; and to *weigh* the *Consequence* before you *form* a *Resolution*.

A discreet and provident *Forecast* is absolutely *necessary* in human Conduct, to enable you to steer your Course through Life with Ease and Satisfaction ; not only requisite to your *temporal Interest*, but in itself an indispensable *Duty*, consonant to the first Principle implanted in human Nature : And we may very easily be brought to conceive in *what* State that Person's Affairs must of consequence be, who never allows any Time to *reflect* and *consider*.

Both sacred and profane History furnishes you with Examples of this kind.

What stronger Instance of *Improvvidence* can you have than in those five Virgins, who took no Oil in their Vessels to supply their Lamps ? Matt. 25. (For to what Purpose *had* they their Vessels, if they made no *Use* of them ?) Surely,

“ Si mens non laeva fuisset,”

(For it is under *that* Denomination [*Mapa*] our LORD bids us to consider them) they would not have neglected this *necessary* Precaution.

An equal Instance of *Improvvidence* is set before you in that Person who “ raised up his Friend at
 Luke 11. “ Midnight to borrow three Loaves, having a
 “ Guest come, and *nothing* to set before him.”

In profane History, *Steel*, *Fielding*, and *Gay*, are *striking* Instances. All of them being once affluent; sustained with Corn, and Wine, and Oil; and (as *Job* expresses it) “ washing their
 Job 29. “ Steps in Butter.” But (by adopting *Horace*’s Maxim)

“ *Dona præsentis rape lætus horæ ;*
 “ *Quid sit futurum cras, fuge querere.*”

Thinking no other than that “ To-morrow
 “ should be as this Day, and much more abun-
 Isaiah 56. “ dant.” They so *embarrassed* their Circumstances, that they were *ever* in Straits and Difficulties; *ever* struggling with Want, *ever* under the Pressure of Necessity.

Were the Enjoyments of the Voluptuary the Foundation of true and solid *Happiness*; (for *this* is the Object in View, though they miss their *Aim*) there might be some *Pretence* at least for such an *eager* Pursuit of them. But in Truth, the Case is much *otherwise*: *Felicity* doth *not* make her Abode with the *Sensualist*, *neither* does she dwell in the *House of Feasting*.—

The

The Voluptuary is *not* the most *happy* Person in the World.—For *Happiness* is a *secret* Thing;—it depends upon *bidden* Causes;—it is founded upon the *Government* of *yourselves*;—it cannot be *acquired*, nor is so valuable a *Purchase* to be *made*, but by Thought, Reflexion, and the Command of your Passions*.

There is an Oeconomy that must always be observed in every Pursuit, Action, or Undertaking. Even your *Pleasures*, except used with *Moderation*, prudently varied, and pursued rather as a temporary *Relaxation*, than as a constant *Employment*, soon become *insipid*. The most innocent Enjoyments have their Bounds. It is a *temperate* Use that constitutes the *Bliss*, and preserves those Powers and Faculties, on the *proper Exertion* of which the *Happiness* of this Life entirely depends. Health and Competence are the Product of *Temperance*; but when once you pass the Bounds of *Moderation*, and

* Yet this is that Generation, who (notwithstanding all our Remonstrances) are wiser in their own Eyes than "Seven Men" that can render a Reason." They are *born* for Pleasure. Prov. 26. They consider it as the *chief End* of Man; and look upon themselves as sent into this World, like "the Leviathan," for "Pastime and Recreation." The Mind is lost in a total *Dissipation* of Thought; and "when they come to themselves," find nothing to support or rest upon. So *eager* in their Pursuits, that their driving is like the driving of *Jehu* the Son of *Nimshi*. They "withhold their Heart from no Joy."—But mark well, O ye Sons of Pleasure! the Denunciation of God, by the Mouth of his Prophet; "This shall ye have of mine Hand; ye shall lie down in Sorrow." 2 Kings 9. Psal. 104. Isaiah 50.

fall into the *Dissipations* of Pleasure, the Taste becomes *vitiating*, the Senses are *impaired*, and the proper Relish of every Enjoyment is *totally lost*.

Moderation is necessary at all Seasons, but never *more* required than when the Mind is *elated with Success*.—Then is the *critical Time*, and then it is highly requisite to keep a strict Guard over the Passions, lest they get the Ascendancy over the Reason. The Example of the *Israelites* is a sufficient Admonition to you in the Sacred History, as that of the *Romans* is in the Profane.

Deut. 8. With regard to the *former*, it was not without Reason that the Great Lawgiver admonished them to “*take heed and beware*,” when they were in the Zenith of their Glory: He knew *then* was the proper Season to inculcate the great Duty of serious Thought, Consideration, and *Reflexion*. As to the *latter*, it is very evident the *Romans* lost Ground by every Victory they gained after the *Carthaginian War*. The Reason is obvious. With the Provinces they added to their Empire, they brought in *new Species of Luxury; Dissoluteness of Manners*, and a *mad Emulation* of all kinds of *Profusion and Expence* run through the Empire, and there was no Check on the *Ambition* of the People. Certain it is, that unless *Moderation* attends *Success*, except *Victory* be improved by *Oeconomy*, the Advantage of

of every Acquisition is *lost*, and Conquest itself becomes *fruitless*.

No Enterprize, at least *no expensive* Scheme whatsoever, ought to be undertaken without first revolving it in your Mind, without weighing your *Abilities* previous to the *Execution*, without “sitting down first to compute the Cost.”

Luke 14.

But to form the Character of the *Oeconomist* more complete, I must add to FORECAST,



O R D E R.

OBERVE the *DIVINE OECONOMY*, Ranging and adjusting *every* thing in such a manner, that there is not a *Particle* of Matter but what hath its proper Place in Subserviency to the *whole* of the Creation.

“ORDER is Heav’n’s first Law.” POPE.

“A beautiful Allusion, (says his ingenious and learned Annotator) to the Scripture-History of the Creation, when God first *appeased* the Disorders of Chaos, and separated the Light from the Darkness.”

Gen. 1.

View the whole Frame of the World, (the wondrous Work of Him who is perfect in Knowledge.)

Job 37. 16.

ledge.) Reflect on the great Laws of Nature, by which it is preserved in Order and Beauty!

Every Part of the Creation concurs to prove that God is, (as the Apostle speaks) *not* the Author of *Confusion*, but of *Order*.

1 Cor. 14.

Job 35.

Look unto the Heavens, and see *all* the celestial Bodies are *constant* in their Courses! They speak in the common Voice of Reason, and want *no* Interpreter to explain their Meaning. They are a *perpetual*, though a *tacit* Admonition to the World every Day and Night; and by their *regular* and *constant* Vicissitude, (as the late Bishop of *London* expresses it) set forth the Excellency of Wisdom and *Order* by which they were constituted.

Psal. 104.

"The Sun has his *stated* Time of going down."

"The Moon is appointed for *certain* Seasons."

136.

"The Stars in their *Courses* govern the Night."

"The Sea keeps its old Channel;" and in its utmost Fury *remembers* the first Law of its Maker—"Hitherto shalt thou go, but no further."

In every *other* Part the Powers of Nature are duly and *regularly* exerted! Even the *inanimate* Things of the World have their Office!

Every Work of the Creation hath its *proper* Business, and is designed by the first Cause of all Things to serve *some* wise End.

"The

“ The *Angels* are his ministring Spirits.
 “ They attend upon and execute his Com-
 “ mands.”

Psal. 103.

Carry your Reflexions a little further, and you will perceive the *Oeconomy* of the Divine Providence with respect to *Miracles* is equally conspicuous.

GOD never inverts the *Order* of Things, except when all human Resources fail, and call for the Exertion of supernatural Powers. Of this you have strong Proofs both in the *Mosaic* and *Evangelical* Dispensations.

Reflect on the admirable Contexture of the human Frame: “ The whole Body fitly joined
 “ together and compacted by that which every
 “ Joint supplieth; so that *each* Member hath
 “ that Office to which it is peculiarly adapted,
 “ performs its *Function*, and is subservient to a
 “ proper End.”

Ephes. 4.

The Supreme Being, who thus doth every thing in *Regularity* and *Method*, will certainly take most Delight in those Servants who love (like *Himself*) “ Decency and Order.”

1 Cor. 14.

OBSERVE the CONDUCT of *CHRIST*,
 The IMAGE of *GOD*:

Hebrews 1.

A perfect Pattern to you, since his Life was one continued Scene of *Order*, *Method*, and *Regularity*; and in *this*, as in every thing *else*, “ he
 “ left

1 Pet. 2. "left you an Example, that you should follow
"his Steps."

Mark 6. When he fed the Five thousand, he did *not* feed them, as the *Latin* speaks, (*Conglomeratim*) for then how *confused* must the Distribution have been! how *irregularly* served! No. He ordered them to *sit down* on the Grass. He disposed them by *Fifties* in a Company. He distributed the Bread *through the Hands of his Disciples*.

John 20. Even in that light and *trivial* Circumstance of the *Napkin*, if any thing may be said to deserve *that* Appellation, in which the LORD of Glory had a Share, you may trace the Footsteps of that *Order, Regularity, and Method*, which extends itself to *every Point* of his Conduct, and is thus *conspicuous* in the most *minute* Occurrences of his Life.

The *Napkin* about his Head, when he rose from the Grave, was not *carelessly* thrown off; nor *loosely* cast aside; nor put to the *other* Linen. No. He *wrapped* it up. He laid it in a Place *by itself*.

Luke 24. "All Scripture is written for our Learning." And doubtless *this* Circumstance was recorded with a View to your Instruction.

Certainly, if the Evangelists had entred *more minutely* into the Conduct of CHRIST; if they had indulged us with *other Particulars* of his Behaviour; (for surely the *smallest* Occurrences that could have been mentioned would have had a *Dignity* attending them, that might have in-
terested

rested the most insensible Heart!) we should have found many Occasions to admire that Beauty of John 21. Order, and Regularity of Method, and Propriety of Conduct, which distinguished him both in his public and private Character.

OBSERVE the ORDER of NATURE,
Thus beautifully displayed by the Royal Psalmist.

“ In the Darkness of the Night all the Beasts
“ of the Forest do move.” Psal. 104.

“ When the Sun ariseth, the Lions, who
“ were before roaring after their Prey, get them
“ away together, and lay them down in their
“ Dens.”

“ The Locusts (says the Wise Man) have no
“ King, yet go they forth all of them by
“ Bands.” Prov. 30.

“ The Stork in the Firmament knoweth her
“ appointed Time.” Jer. 8.

“ The Turtle, the Crane, and the Swallow
“ observe their Seasons.”

“ Yet GOD hath deprived them of Wisdom,
“ neither hath He imparted to them Understand-
“ ing.” Job 39.

The Roman Poet hath thus described the Oc-
economy of the Bees.

“ Mane ruunt portis, nusquam mora, rursus
“ eandem

“ Vesper

“ *Vesper ubi e pastu tandem decedere campis*
 “ Admonuit, *tum tecta petunt, tum corpora*
 “ *curant.*” VIRGIL.

Thus then to Man the Voice of *Nature* spake;
 “ Go, from the *Creatures* thy Instruction
 “ take.” POPE.

Is this apparent in the *Animal* Creation? Equally
 is it so in the *Vegetable*.

“ First the Blade, then the Ear, then the full
 “ Corn in the Ear:” The Steps of Nature are
 Mark 4. “ *progressive.* To every thing there is a *Season.*”

Isaiah 1. If then every Part of the Creation—if the
Beasts of the Field, the *Fowls* of the Air, which
 have no Understanding, thus observe, by *Instinct*,
 a regular *Order* and due *Course*, shall *Man*, who
 enjoys the Light of *Reason*, hurry on precipi-
 tately, without any Regard to *Regularity* and
Method, when the Testimony of his own Sen-
 ses, as well as the Pattern of the Brute Creation,
 condemns such a Practice, and tells him, in as
 plain Terms as possible, that *Confusion* and *Em-
 barrassment* must of consequence be attendant on
 those who (in the Expression of the Apostle)

2 Thess. 3. “ walk disorderly ?”

The Annals of History point out to you,
 in a strong Light, the natural Consequences
 which flow from a *Relaxation of Discipline*.
 That Anarchy and Confusion must inevitably en-
 sue, may be easily traced in the Rise and Fall of
 the

the ancient Republics—the Commonwealths of Greece and Rome*. Every Instance concurs to prove that *Liberty*, if it once degenerates into *Licentiousness*, is equally detrimental to the *State*, and to every *Individual* of the Community; and that the Reins of Government can no longer be held with *Dignity*, than whilst a due Regard to *Propriety* and *Decorum*, *Regularity* and *Subordination*, is inviolably preserved and maintained.

Certain it is that *Jethro*, whose Judgment Exodus 18. was *matured* by Age and Experience, did not a little improve the Conduct of the Great Law-giver, by his wise Counsel and admirable Advice. With what *Ease* did *Moses* afterwards govern the People, when he acted according to *his* Directions?—"Appointing Rulers of Thousands, " Rulers of Hundreds, Rulers of Fifties, and " Rulers of Tens. The *hard* Causes they " brought to *Moses*, but every *small* Matter the " *Deputies* judged themselves; so that the Peo- " ple returned to their respective Homes, satis- " fied and in Peace." And it was by such an *Oeconomical* Administration, that he was enabled to " feed them with a faithful and true Heart, and " to rule them prudently with all his Power." Psal. 78.

Without a strict *Discipline*, a settled Execution of the *Laws*, and a regular Administration of *Justice*, the celebrated *Roman* Orator asserts †,

* See the Orations of *Demosthenes* and *Cicero*.

† Oratio pro *M. Marcello*.

there

there can be no solid Basis for that Fame which is true and permanent.

There is such a *Beauty* in Method and Regularity, that one would imagine every Person must be naturally *enamoured* with it!—Every Person would observe it on account of the *Facility* with which it enables them to conduct their Affairs; the *Ease* with which they can transact their Business, state their Accounts, and pass through the *various* Concerns of Life.

Gen. 32. 33. What a striking *Example of Oeconomy* is set before you in the Person of the Patriarch *Jacob*, in the Disposition of his *Wives*, his *Children*, and his *Cattle*! Very visible is his Observance of *Rule*, and his Attention to *Order*, in his arranging the respective Companies. Why they were to keep a suitable *Distance* each from other—Why the Stages of their Journey were to be *short*—and why their Movements *slow*. It was for *prudential Reasons* there given. And as this *Disposition* was suggested by the Impulse of *Fear*, which frequently “betrays those Succours that “Reason offers,” it is a natural Inference, that the same Regard to *Order* and *Method* characterized his *Conduct* under every Situation.

1 Tim. 3. Where there is *Regularity*, the Cottage of the meanest Peasant looks like a little Commonwealth within itself. For how agreeable is it to see (in the Expression of the Apostle) Persons “ruling well “their own House!”—To see a Family under
so

so *exact* an *Oeconomy*, as that the Hours of Devotion and Repast, Employment and Diversion, never break in upon, but duly and with Propriety follow each other!

Such a constant, *orderly*, and beautiful Succession must equally *delight* the Eye of the Beholder, as the *Practice* becomes familiar and pleasing to those who *walk* in the Paths of it.

With what Earnestness does the Apostle of the Gentiles in *one* place enjoin a regular Conduct to the primitive Christians! And in *another* place you find him actually rejoicing when he beheld their *Order*, following his Pattern, as he followed CHRIST.

1 Cor. 14.
Coloss. 2.

It is recorded, to the Honour of the Friend of GOD and the Father of the Faithful, with what *admirable Order* he commanded his * Children and his Household.

Gen. 18.

It was for *this Reason* that he was to be made a great and mighty Nation—A manifest Proof, that (as the Apostle argues) *the same Order with which he conducted his own private Affairs, was*

* To the Neglect of a regular Method of Education, and being trained up in a proper Institution and Discipline, may, in a great Measure, be imputed the *Dissipation* and *Extravagance* of the modern Times. The salutary Principles of *Oeconomy* are, for the most part, either lightly regarded, or through a mistaken Notion become, by the Generality of the World, an Object of Contempt; and if considered in this Light, it is not to be wondered, that this important Branch, so indispensably necessary to render all Persons happy in themselves, and useful Members of Society, makes no Part in the Education of their Offspring, while the Mind is pliant, and flexible, and susceptible of the best Impressions.

equally

equally proper to be extended over a great and mighty Nation. For the Machine of Government can no longer vibrate, than whilst its Movements are regular; and, under God, the Wealth, Strength, and Prosperity of a Nation, chiefly depends on its internal Police and civil Oeconomy.

Was it not the *Order, Regularity, and Method*, with which every thing was conducted by *Solomon*—The Disposition of his Fleets and Armies—The Discipline of his Officers—The *1 Kings 10.* Meat of his Table—The Sitting of his Servants—The Attendance of his Ministers, &c. that so particularly attracted the Admiration of the Queen of *Sheba*, and struck her with such Surprise, “that no more Spirit was left in her?”

Every one was placed in their respective Ranks; each had their particular Employment; and every Thing was (as under such an *Oeconomical* Direction it necessarily must be) “beautiful in its Season.”

But to perfect the Character of the *Oeconomist*, I must add to *ORDER*,



PRUDENCE.

P R U D E N C E.

THIS implies a *proper Enjoyment* of what you have—to make a *discreet Use* of it—to act agreeably to your *Character*—to *suit* yourself to your *Circumstances*—to whatever Situation of Life Providence hath placed you in. It implies a *Conduct* entirely *consistent* with itself upon all Occasions and in every Station; equally distant from *Profusion* on the one hand, and *Avarice* on the other—A strict Observance of the Apostle's Exhortation, “Be ye temperate in all Things;” industriously avoiding not only 1 Cor. 9. what is in itself *improper*, but also whatever has the least or most remote *Appearance* of Impropriety †; that the Tongue of the *Slanderer* may be struck dumb, and *Malevolence* lose its Sting.

Is your Lot fallen in a *fair Ground*? Hath Psal. 16. God intrusted you with *great Talents*? Consider how great soever your Possessions may be, you are in Reality no more than a *Steward*: The Talents you have are committed to you in

† *Propriety* of Conduct was considered by the ancient Philosophers as the most essential Part of Virtue, and *Prudence* ranked high amongst the Cardinal ones.

Trust,

Trust, and for the Management of them you must be *responsible*.

There is *One* who cannot be deceived ; who knows of the Wealth you are possessed of, and how much is too often thrown away in *vicious Pursuits* or *needless Expences*.

“ All Mankind (as a late excellent Writer † expresses it) are *equal* Sharers in the Wants and Necessities of Life ; and the Things which should *supply* these Wants are *unequally* divided.” Some abound, whilst others suffer Need.—“ It follows, that the *Abundance* of the one should minister to the *Necessities* of the other : For when you have discharged the *relative* Duties, you then become a Debtor to such Acts of *Beneficence*, as are required at the Hands of all those to whom God hath dispensed his Gifts liberally.”

Let no *Plenty* tempt you to be *profuse*. Was not your Affluence designed to promote GOD's Glory, as well as the Benefit of your Fellow-Creatures ? Most certainly—But *Profusion* and *Extravagance* are subservient to neither.

So enjoy your Abundance, as that what is *over* may not be *wasted* nor *misapplied* ; always remembering the Words of the LORD JESUS, how he said — “ Give *not* that which is holy to *Dogs*.—*Gather up* the Fragments that remain,

Matt. 7.

John 6.

† Bishop Sherlock's Discourses, Vol. iii, p. 102.

“ that

“that *nothing be lost*.”—Certainly the best *Rule* for your Direction in *this* and *all* Respects is, the *Conduct* of that Divine Person, who dignified our Nature by condescending to *assume* it.

Set *his* Pattern before your Eyes.

Let *his* Precepts be the Model of your Practice.

Let his *Example* influence your Lives.

The Words *, you see very evidently, contain John 6. 12, both a Command and a Prohibition.

You are *enjoined*, after a *sober* Use of the daily Bread God hath given you, to gather up the Remains, the Overplus, and reserve them for a *future* Occasion. You are *prohibited*, as by the Bounty of Heaven you *received* it, from either making *Waste*, suffering it to be *made*, or seeing ought *misused* or *misapplied*; as undoubtedly it is very much so, when either on the one hand, it ministers to *Excess* of any kind, or on the other hand, *squandering* “the Childrens Bread, by “*casting it to Dogs*.” Matt. 15.

It is your Duty to *perform* what our LORD bids you—to be provident—careful—frugal †—to “gather up the Fragments which remain.” Equally does it become you to *abstain* from what he *prohibits* you.—Not thoughtlessly to *squander*.

* To make the greater Impression upon the Reader, this *very* same Portion of Scripture is appointed by our Church to be *twice* read in her second Service—the 4th Sunday in Lent, and the 25th Sunday after Trinity; (and I know of no other such Instance.) There is no other in the whole second Service.

† “Frugalitatem virtutem esse maximam iudico.”

CICERO pro Rege DEIOTARO.

B

waste,

waste, or make *Consumption*—“ Let nothing be
“ *lost*.”

But perhaps some one will ask—“ *Cui bono*
“ *inservit ?*”—To descend to such *minute*
Things—(‘ For the Words are *not*—“ *Such*
“ was the Provision, that every one might take
“ a *little*”—‘ or that—“ There was a Suffici-
“ ency for *each* in so *great* a Number to partake
“ a *small* Share.”—‘ No. But it is *expressly*
‘ said, “ They had *all eaten*—They had *all*
“ *eaten*, even to *Satiety*.”—‘ What then *could*
‘ there remain, but “ the *Crumbs ?*”—‘ Of
‘ which, ordinarily speaking, *no Care* is wont to
‘ be taken’—“ They fall under the Table.”)

I answer—What God hath thought fit to
propose to you, yea, and *expressly* to *enjoin*,—that
call not thou “ *minute*.” Would not the Prac-
tice thereof turn out to *your* Advantage, as the
Disciples undoubtedly found it did to *theirs*,
when at one Time, they gathered no less than
Mark 8. *twelve* Baskets, at another *seven*? For as they
well reasoned among themselves, though upon
another Occasion—“ It becometh us not to *lose*
“ any thing!—To what Purpose should there
Matt. 26. “ be *Waste* made?”

Does not this *Gathering up* the Fragments,
prevent their being *lost*? For *that* is the Duty
incumbent upon you—*this* is your *next* Care.
They may be useful to *yourselves*; for your *pre-*
sent Affluence is no Security against *future* Exi-
gencies.

gencies. They may be serviceable to *others*;
 “ for the *Poor* you have always with you, and
 “ when you will, you may do them *Good*.”

Mark 14.

Suffer here a *small* Digression in Favour of a
Duty which my Subject naturally leads me to,
 and which is in itself the very Life and Spirit of
Christianity.

Every Principle of *Humanity*—every Motive
 of *Religion*—every Maxim of *Policy*—every Ar-
 gument of the *Understanding*—and every Senti-
 ment of the *Heart*, pleads for the Discharge of
 this *great Duty*.

“ Be glad to distribute,” is what the Voice
 of *Reason* and *Revelation* inculcates, the invisi-
 ble Tie of *Nature* prompts you to, *Conscience*
 approves, and your *Condition* of Life empowers
 you to perform.

1 Tim. 6.

If where there is *Bread* enough, and to spare,
 those who stand *without want* it, Sin lies at your
 Door.

Gen. 4.

Consider well; *Oeconomy* is the *Parent* of
Beneficence. By your *gathering up* the Frag-
 ments which remain, you will be the better en-
 abled to “ *scatter them abroad upon the Waters*.”
 This is the right *Principle* of *Frugality*.

Eccles. 31.

Certainly your *Light* never *shines* before Men
 with more resplendent Lustre, nor can yield
 greater Satisfaction to your *own Breast*, than
 whilst you are communicating that Happiness to
 others which you yourself enjoy; and like the

B 2

Sun

Sun with its benign Influence, calling forth the Powers of Nature. The greatest Man in all the East did not in any one Thing display a more *amiable Pattern* for your Imitation than in this—that “he never eat his Morsel himself alone, so that the Fatherless did not eat thereof with him.”

Job 31.

Were something *spared* from the Elegancies, I may say with greater Propriety, from the Superfluities of Life; if some unnecessary Expences were *retrenched*, and other pompous Exuberances *rescinded*, (which cannot *profit*, nor yield any permanent Bliss, for they are *vain*;) what ample Room would there be left for such Actions, as give a secret Delight in the *Performance*, and the Pleasure of which improves in *Reflexion*?

Sam. 12.

To a *thoughtful* Person, (if he attends to what his own Mind *dictates* to him) *this* Reflexion will always be uppermost. Whilst I—

Luke 16.

λαμπρός—not only *enjoy* all the Comforts, but even *wanton* amidst all the Superfluities of Life, ought I not to send *Portions* to them, for whom *nothing* is prepar'd?

Neh. 8.

Consider: It is by *such an Use* of the good Things you are possessed of, that you will be *intitled* to that desirable Blessing the Wise Man alludes to—An *Exemption from Sorrow*. (Very often indeed the Case is much otherwise; the *Worm* lies at the Root of the *Gourd*, and Blessing is

Jonah 4.

is far from them;) "God maketh rich, and adds no Sorrow with it." Psal. 109.
Prov. 10.

Are your Circumstances "minished" and "brought low?" *Contract* your Desires. Psal. 107.

Perhaps God hath *not* set your Feet in a large Room, yet, if you are possessed of *two Mues*, that, with prudent Management, will be sufficient. That it is a *small Sum*, we will admit; but that it *has* been deem'd sufficient, is very evident, for it *sustain'd* a *Widow*,—it was,—her *whole* Living,—and, till she thought fit to *Part* with it, gave her Bread to eat, and Raiment to put on. Under *strait* Circumstances, undoubtedly there *will* be Difficulties, there *will* be Grievances, there *will* be Temptations!—When *Job* expostulates with his Friends, he has *Truth* enough to support his Question;—"Does the wild Ass bray when he *has* Meat? Or loweth the Ox over his *Fodder*?" But though there are no *coercive Means* you can use to gain an extraordinary Supply; though you cannot *command* that the Barrel of Meal waste not, and that the Cuse of Oil should not fail; yet by a *well-timed Self-denial* you can cut off *many needless superfluous Expences*—yet you may (and ought indeed) so far to withhold yourself from making such Provision for the Flesh, as to fulfil the Lusts thereof—yet you can *improve* what you have to the best *Advantage*. Psal. 31.
Luke 21.
Mark 12.
Gen. 25.
Job 6.
1 Kings 17.

It is observable in the Gospel, that when a Samaritan took a stone and cast it at Jesus, he said, "I am a Samaritan, and I worship this place." But Jesus said, "The place which the Jews adore, is not here, but in the heart of man."

In this vast and beautiful System of the Universe, where not a single Atom *stands still*, where every Part of the Creation is *employed*, can it be supposed with any Colour of Reason, that *Man*, endued with superior Faculties, is formed only to sit down to *eat*, and *drink*, and rise up to *play*?

Exodus 32.

Man was *not* made to be *idle*, but was intended from his original State of Innocence for an *active* Life; and therefore, as soon as he was formed, he was sent into the Garden of *Eden*, to *till*, to *dress*, and to *keep* it.

Gen. 2.

What various Incentives are there to *Industry*?

In the natural Course of Things it is so ordered, that *nothing* valuable can be procured *without* it; for the *Earth* bringeth not forth *Fruit* without a *repeated Tillage*, and a *continued Cultivation*.

Here we may with Pleasure observe those admirable *Institutions*, which the Wisdom of the Legislature hath erected, for the Encouragement of *Industry*, the Cultivation of *Arts* and *Sciences*, the Advancement of *Commerce*, and the Improvement of useful *Manufactures*; with a View to *animate* the World to a laudable Exertion of their *Faculties*, to *raise* a noble and generous Spirit of *Emulation*, ever conducive to the *Welfare* and *Prosperity* of a *commercial* People.

It is observable in the Gospel, that when a certain Man took a *Journey* into a far Country, he

he did not leave his *Affairs at home unsettled, unprovided for, or disconcerted.* “He gave to
 “each Man his *Work*: To one five Talents—
 “to another two—to every one according to his
 “several Abilities, with Orders to each to oc-
 “cupy the same till his Return:” And then he Mark 13.
 rewarded the Industry of those who had faithfully discharged the Trust reposed in them.

A supine Negligence is in itself criminal. Accordingly you find *that Servant*, who let his Talent lie dead and unimproved, is not only severely rebuked for being slothful and unprofitable, but for being wicked. Luke 19.

It does not appear, that he wasted it by *Extravagance.* But his Fault was, he did not improve it; he wrapped it up in a Napkin—he hid it in the Earth—when it certainly became his Duty to have put it out to the Exchangers. Matt. 25.

Endeavour by the honest Arts of Industry and Labour, Diligence and Frugality, (“rising up
 “early, late taking Rest, and eating the Bread
 “of Carefulness”) to improve what you are Psal. 127.
 possessed of, to the best Advantage, and to gain, if possible, an additional Talent to the one you have, never “enlarging your Desires” beyond Hab. 2.
 the Limits of your Fortune. Prudence requires that you should conform yourself to your Station, check all aspiring Views; and in your Seasons of Relaxation, as well as in every other Point of your Conduct, consult your own Cir-
 cumstances,

circumstances, not the *Pattern* of your *Superiors*, and proportion your *current Expences* to your *annual Revenue*.

It is a Reflexion, which, though with Reluctancy, Truth obliges me to make—A Prevalence of *Luxury*, the *Love* of false *Pleasure*, and the *Pride* of *Life*, tempts (I had almost said) all Persons to *live above* the Rank which they hold in the *Society*, impelled in a great measure by that *prevailing Vice**, which so easily besets the *Unguarded*, is destructive of all *Morals*, *Industry*, and *Order*, and a Stimulus to every other *vicious Pursuit*.

In this Particular, surely “the former Times were better than these.” If we view the general Propensity to *Gaiety*, *Dissipation*, and *Extravagance*, which at present reigns in all Conditions of *Life*. *Luxury* hath fatally spread its Influence among those *middling Parts* of the *Community*, which heretofore were untainted.

Dazzled with the *false Glitter* of *Pomp* and *Grandeur*—eager to *outriv* each other—their Senses are *captivated* with the dissolute *Maxims* of *Luxury* and *Pleasure*; and no Wonder, when they see through the *Medium* of *Ambition* and *Envy*, that they reflect not on the *Impropriety* of *Conduct*, the *Inequality* of *Station*, or the *Disproportion* of *Revenue*.

Certain

* Gaming.

Certain it is, the Manners of the People are influenced by the Conduct of those who move in a higher Sphere. The Pattern they set, whether virtuous or vicious, is a Model implicitly imitated by those that are in an inferior Station.

What are the *Opinions* and *Practices* of the Rulers?—Was the Question of the *ancient* Pharisees; and the *modern* Times are actuated by the *same* Motives. Custom and Education lead the Way, and a natural Disposition prompts to it. John 7.

Of this you have a striking Proof in the *Lacedæmonian* Republic; which, as a learned Hea-then † informs us, soon partook of the common Fate of Empires, when its Leaders fell into a State of Degeneracy.

Since “these Things are so,” Luxury and Pro- fusion, Waste, Intemperance, and its concomitant Train, must therefore *first* be banished from the Tables of the Great, and then we may hope to see Frugality and Sobriety, Industry and Diligence, reign among the *inferior* Orders of Men, and the happy Fruits of such Conduct diffused through every Member of Society. Aas 7.

The Christian should consider himself (like the ancient Philosopher) as a Citizen of the World, and every Species of Luxury and Pro- fusion as *injurious* to that Community, of which he is a Member.

† Xenophon.

Take a View of ancient History. There you will find that the *Glory* of a Nation was never founded on the *Luxury* of the People; but, on the contrarv, that it always consisted in *Discipline*, *Temperance*, and the salutary *Maxims* of *Virtue* and *Moderation*. *Luxury* always relaxes the *Sinews* of Government. The Reason is obvious. A Depravity of Taste, and Degeneracy of Morals, are the natural Effects of *Luxury* and *Dissipation*; and when the internal Principles of Action are vitiated, the Arts, Sciences, and every rational Pursuit, must of consequence decline.

Seldom, very seldom, do we find the Apostle so vehement in his Exhortations, so earnest in his Remonstrances, and under such Commotions, as when he is inveighing against that very Sin, from which I am now dissuading you—"How often, (says he to the *Philippians*) have I told you before, and now tell you, even weeping, that if you thus continue to give up yourselves to your own Hearts *Lusts*, reject and disclaim all Acts of *Self-denial*, as if not Christian Duties, and break through every Rule of *Temperance*, *Sobriety*, and *Moderation*, the End thereof will terminate in your *Destruction*."

Phil. 3.

A little is enough for all the *Necessities*, for all the innocent *Delights* of Nature; and it may be very justly asserted, that without *Oeconomy*, how large

large soever an Estate is, there will still be a Deficiency; for, as *Horace* observes,

“ *Multa petentibus, desunt multa.*”

But with *Oeconomy*, it will always be found that the *least* Estate is not too small—

“ *Vivitur parvo bene.*”

He, who knows his Duty, will not request God for more, than what he is taught to pray for, viz. that Heaven would bestow upon him

“ *This Day* his daily Bread.”

Matt. 6.

He, whose God is his Belly, (as the Apostle expresses it) will not be so restrained, will not be satisfied with asking for *To day*, (“neither with “two Days, nor five Days, neither with ten “Days, nor twenty Days.”) No. His Language is—“Give me such *Plenty*, as I may be “*independent*.—Give me such an *ample Share* “of the good Things of this Life, as that my “Soul may take her *Ease*.” Such is the *Presumption*, (says the Evangelist) of the voluptuous Epicure.—On the other hand,

Phil. 3.

Numb. 11.
19.

Luke 12.

Admire the *Moderation* of *Agur*—“Conve-
“nient Food.” That is, so much as will sa-
tisfy the *Cravings* of Nature: He solicited for
nothing further; nothing more than what was
essentially necessary. “Necessary (says the Sa-

Prov. 30.

“ cred Writer) for *Strength*, but not to *Surfeit*.
 Eccles. 10. “ *ing.*” So say the Profane Writers—

“ *Modò importuna pauperies abest.*”

“ *Modò Deus obtulit parcâ (quod satis est) manu*”—
Bene est.—

Hear the Appointment of the *Shunamite* with
 respect to the Man of God: “ Let us make a
 “ little Chamber, and set for him there a *Bed*,
 2 Kings 4. “ and a *Table*, a *Stool*, and a *Candlestick.*”

Real Wants are few,—*imaginary* ones innumerable.—A *real Want* is *cheaply* satisfied,—but an *useless Vanity* is very *costly*.

Fancy, Taste, and Caprice, have invented an
 infinite Number of *Superfluities*, unknown to
 our Ancestors, and introduced many expensive
Follies, under the Notion of modern *Refine-*
ments.

To contract the *Desires* is the grand Principle
 of human *Happiness*—“ Seekest thou *great Things*
 Jer. 45. “ for thyself?” The Voice of enlightned *Reason*,
 as well as *Scripture*, replies—“ Seek them
 “ *not.*” For when once a *Loose* is given to the
Desire of *Superfluities*, you know no End—your
Wishes are vague and *unlimited*—you can set no
 Bounds: The Gratification of *one* inordinate
 Pursuit paves the Way for *another*; and no sooner
 is the *present* vain Wish indulged, than a *future*
imaginary Necessity arises, equally importunate.

Retrench your Expences, inviolably adhering
 to that admirable Axiom of the Roman Poet—

—“ *Infra*

—“*Infra*—
“*Fortunam debet quisq; manere suam*”

OVID.

Your Portion is not *large* indeed,
But then how *little* do you need?

For Nature's Calls are few.

In *this* the Art of Living lies,

To want *no more* than may suffice;

And make that *little* do.

Dr COTTON.

What *Riches* give, only let's enquire,

Meat, Fire, Clothes;—What more?—Meat,

Clothes, and Fire.

POPE.

Mark well, when the Poet asks the Question—
What more? The *Beauty* of his Answer is in
repeating the same Words—He hath *made* the
Enquiry—they can *give* no more.

The utmost *Riches* can do, upon the largest
Concessions made to them, is to provide “Food
“and Raiment;” and indeed, without a dis-
creet Management, “the greatest Possessions
“will fly away, as an Eagle towards Heaven.”

Prov. 23.

8.

It is “Wisdom that dwells with Prudence.”—

Psal. 111.

It is “a good Understanding” that will make a
small Portion prove a *Competency*.

10.

It is always with Pleasure observed, that a
certain *Neatness* and *Cheerfulness* attends the

Table

Table of him who lives *within Compass*, where every thing is conducted with that beautiful System of *Oeconomy*, which unites *Elegance* with *Simplicity*, and *Taste* with *Propriety*.

Daily Experience confirms *this* Truth, that he who *wastes* his Substance, when possessed of a *moderate* Fortune, his Finances would be equally *exhausted*, if he had a more *ample* Revenue. The Cause is self-evident. There is a certain *Air* of *Waste*, *Negligence*, and *Extravagance*, runs through *every thing*; that it is no Wonder if *herein* the Observation of *Job* is perfectly applicable—"In the Fulness of his Sufficiency he
 Job 20. "shall be in Straits."

The prudent Person *thrives* in his temporal Affairs. It is for *this* Reason—Because he often *balances* his Accounts; *examines* his Gains and his Losses; sees what *Proportion* they bear to each other; considers where his *Conduct* may have been *faulty* in any respect, and how for the future to *rectify* it.

On the other hand, he who hath involved himself in *Debt* by a long Course of *Extravagance* and *Prodigality*, finds himself utterly unable to state his Accounts. The *Occasion* of it is clear—They become every Day more perplexed and intricate, being a mere *Stranger at home*, and ignorant of his *domestic* Concerns.
 Hab. 2.

The prudent Person preserves his Affairs *unembarrassed*, and *justly* can call what he hath *his own*.

own. Why? Because he *strictly* adheres to the Apostolical Injunction—"Owe no Man any thing." Living thus always *within* his Income, his Retrospection is without *Regret*, equally as his Prospect is without *Terror*; has no Incentives to (because indeed he has no *Occasion* for) *mean* Artifices or *evasive* Subterfuges; is able at any time to retire from the World; step into his Closet, and reflect with Pleasure on his past Conduct.

Rom. 13.

But to change the Scene.—What are the Fruits of *Luxury*, *Sensuality*, and *Intemperance*? Disease preying upon your Vitals; at the same time, that your *Morals* are vitiated, your whole Frame is *enervated*, "the whole *Head* is sick, the whole *Heart* is faint."

Malah 4.

What are the Fruits of *Waste*, *Profusion*, and *Extravagance*? Want and Poverty, and a Train of Consequences, no less fatal to your Fortune, than the other to your Health.

Prov. 23.

Here it may not perhaps be *foreign* to the Design, to take a View of the Situation of that Person who hath *wasted* his Substance with *riotous living*. Can we count such an one *happy*? No. In the Nature of Things it is *incompatible*. His Mind cannot be at *Ease*—without, are *Aspersions* and *Reproaches*—within, *Fear* and *Confusion*! View him in all his Connexions, and you will find him *equally* miserable, looking in vain for that *Respect* which he hath forfeited by his Conduct.

Luke 15.

There

There may perhaps be carried on a specious *Shew* of Pomp; but it is a kind of magnificent Indigence, a splendid Poverty. There wants that *Propriety, Consistency, and Symmetry* of Parts, which constitutes and distinguishes *real Grandeur*.

Acts 24,
25.

Can Reason or Reflection yield him any Succour upon this Occasion? No. These, which are the greatest Blessings to him who *can* use them, become to this Person a Burden insupportable. The Reason is obvious. His Conduct will not bear a strict Scrutiny; and the *deeper* he enters into it, the more *formidable* is the Scene that opens! So formidable, that we may well take up the Words of the Prophet, and say, "Behold" "and see, if there be *any* Sorrow like unto *this* "Sorrow!" He therefore makes haste to escape from the *serious Hour*, yet notwithstanding all his Efforts, it *will* come.

Lam. 1.
32.

He may indeed flatter himself with a delusive Appearance of great Possessions: But "when" "he comes to himself," he finds he is only *titular*—not *actual* Possessor of them. There are *many* lay Claim, and perhaps, he hath not sufficient to answer their Demands.

Luke 15.

What is the Consequence? Liberty itself, the most *valuable* Privilege, he is not secure of. Has he a Family? This Circumstance embitters his Calamity, and makes it, if possible, more poignant; for they must be involved in the *same*

ishment, though probably they were not necessary to the *Guilt*. Is he deprived of Liberty? What must the poor Widow and Orphans do? For a *Widow* she certainly is, and *Orphans* they are, to all the Intents and Purposes of Sorrow, whilst he “is fast bound in Misery and Iron.” Psal. 107.

This is not an *imaginary Picture, ideal*, formed only in the *Fancy*, but a *real Representation* of the *Effects* of Extravagance.—“And when I looked, behold a Hand was sent unto him; and lo! a Roll of a Book was therein; and it was written *within and without*—Lamentations, and Mourning, and Wo!” Too many melancholy Instances there are to give sufficient Evidence, that these are the “Words of Truth and Soberness.” Ezek. 2, 9, 10.

And now upon a View of the Whole, (having weighed Actions and their Consequences in the just Balance) which of the two can be properly said to *enjoy* Life, the prudent *temperate* Person who lives *within* his Income? or the Voluptuary and the Sensualist, who run *beyond* it? For *each* counts the Life of the *other* Madness. Acts 26. 25.

The Voice of *Reason* will decide; and *Experience* has set to its Seal, that this *Testimony* is true. Wisdom 3.

You see every Day the pernicious Effects of *Profuseness*, and whereto it will ultimately tend*.

He

* It is an Observation worthy of his present Grace of York, and Experience proves it to be founded upon Truth, That “*Frugality*” See his Sermon

He therefore that gives into it, must not be destitute of Thought? void of all Reflexion? Certainly—the Expression of the Evangelist confirms it—“When he came to himself”—implying, that his former Conduct was heady, rash, and precipitate, when all the Powers of Reason lay dormant.

It is observable, that when a Widow of one of the Sons of the Prophets implored Redress from the Man of God, on account of the Demands of a relentless Creditor, she assigned this Reason—“Thy Servant feared the LORD;”—implying, that had her Distress been the Consequence of Extravagance, she would not have been a fit Object of Compassion; for,

All Wastefulness is Sin.

You have not in the whole Scriptures a more

at Christ-
Church,
London,
April 26,
1753.

“*gality* is the strongest Safeguard to *Fidelity*.” *Extravagance*, on the other hand, is often observed to be antecedent to *Breach of Trust*.

Had not the Steward in the Gospel *wasted* the Substance of his Lord, it is very probable, having no Inducement to the contrary, he would have maintained his Integrity.

Several Instances concur to point out *this Truth*, which is in itself obvious. *Want* is the certain Consequence of *Waste*; and the *Shame* which arises from a Sense of Poverty, is an *Impulse* to supply by low Schemes the Deficiencies occasioned by *Extravagance*, and to cover their *Indigence* at the Expence of their *Prudence*. They fancy they preserve an Influence, which, when exerted, they find themselves mistaken; and under this Dilemma, in order, as they vainly imagine, to retrieve their former Importance, are tempted to a Breach of *Trust*—to violate the Rules of *Justice*,—and to pursue mean *Artifices*. I need but produce one Instance, (and that a striking one) the celebrated Lord *Verulam*.

glaring

glaring Instance of this, than in the Gospel of St Luke, where it is emphatically called—"A Sin *against Heaven*."

Luke 15.

If one Man sin against *another*, as Eli observes, "the Judge shall judge him"—the Cognizance then comes before the civil *Magistrate*—"the Law is open—they may implead one another."

1 Sam. 2.

Acts 19.

But this is an *aggravated* Guilt—Many concurring Circumstances tend to *heighten* it into what the Psalmist calls a "*great Offence*." *Himself* confesses it—"I have sinned *against Heaven*." "I have sinned *against my Father*."

Psal. 19.

If ever "Satan stood at the right Hand" of an unguarded Youth, to point out to him "the broad Way that leadeth to Destruction," it certainly was *here*.

109.

Instead of attending to this *salutary* Maxim—"Let *nothing* be lost"—What *Havock* was made! What *Destruction* was wrought! He squandered *without Measure*, being indulged *without Control*. In one comprehensive Phrase—"Every thing was lost." Every Blessing from above perverted, misused, misapplied—His *Honour* laid in the Dust—his *Health* sacrificed—his *Patrimony* devoured—his *Time* vilely thrown away—his *Duty* to God, his Neighbour, and himself, violated.

Joh 6.

Behold *here* the Wretch completed.

Behind him he saw nothing but Guilt and Shame:

Shame: Before him nothing but *Misery and Despair*.

Observe now the Connexion. Observe, Judge

2 Pet. 2. ment lingers not.

2 Kings 21. "Hast thou found me, O mine Enemy?—I
"have found thee."

Psalms 39. When God with Rebukes doth chasten Man
for Sin, very often he doth it *instantaneously*.

Eccles. 8. "Sentence against an evil Work is executed
"speedily," and "the right-aiming Thunder,

Wisdom 5. "bolt" immediately levelled at the Head of the
Offender.

Psalms 64. Hear what the Royal Psalmist says: "God
"suddenly shoots at them with a swift Arrow,

"The Lord knoweth the Thoughts of Man,
"that they are vain." But sure never more vain,

Psalms 56. than when they think they shall "escape for their
"Wickedness."

Luke 23. For no sooner do you read of his *riotous living*,
than you read of as quick a Succession by *relentless Poverty*.

Prov. 24. "It came upon him like one that
"travellith. It seized him like an armed Man."

Does Experience give Testimony to this Truth?

18. So also does Scripture. The Great Master will certainly find it "Bit-

2 Sam. 2. "terneness in the latter End."

It will ("Erit, erit illud profecto tempus, &
"illucescet tandem aliquando ille dies quum *.")

It

It certainly will, sooner or later, (in that emphatical Expression of the Royal Psalmist) "come into his Bowels like Water, and like Oil into his Bones."

Psal. 109.

When the prodigal Son had spent *all*, then it was that God called for a *Dearth* upon the Land, and destroyed all the Provision of Bread.

105.

It is a just Remark of a Writer, who well knew the World, That "Numbers are brought into bad Circumstances rather from *small Negligence*, than from any *great Errors* in material Affairs." People are too apt to think lightly of Shillings and Pence, forgetting that they are the constituent Parts of a Pound, till a Deficiency in the greater Article shews them their Mistake—convinces them by *dear-bought* Experience of a Truth, which they might have learnt from a little Attention, viz. that *Great Sums are made up of small*; and that therefore "he that contemneth *small Things* must of consequence *fall by little and little*."

Ecclus. 19.

And now, before I close this Essay, I would remark to you *one* Observation, which may not perhaps, in the Course of your Reading, have engaged your *Attention*, viz.

This laudable Example of "Gathering up the Fragments which remain, that nothing be lost," proposed by CHRIST, and practised by his Disciples, is set before you by every Evangelist. "Let him that readeth, understand."

Matt. 24.

Mark 6.

Luke 9.

John 6.

Matt. 24.

Was

Was it of *little* or of *small* Importance, would it have found so *many* Pages in the sacred Text? Would it have been so *very* particularly repeated, inculcated, enforced?

This certainly is a *very striking*, (I had almost said an unparalleled) Circumstance, and indicates
 Matt. 7.29. it to be highly worthy of *Him* who spoke it—
 Luke 9. and of “*sinking deep into your Ears.*”

Each of the Evangelists have *some* Criterion whereby to distinguish them.

One represents CHRIST exerting his Divine
 Acts 10. Power in *doing Good.*

Another views him enlightning the People by his *Doctrine*, by which their *Prepossessions* were
 Luke 4. *shaken*, and their *Prejudices loosened.*

One views him in his *public* Character, whilst
another accompanies him through the *Garden*, his Hours of *Retirement*, and his *private* Con-
 John 18. ferences.

It is easy to discern, That

Matthew applies himself to the *Miracles*, and to the Completion of the *Prophecies.*

Mark, (the *shortest* of all the Gospels) is the most *circumstantial* in relating the *Sufferings* of CHRIST.

Psal. 78. *Luke* opens his Mouth in *Parables.*

John, (ever attendant upon his Master) lets
 Luke 4. none of those *gracious Words* which proceeded out of his Mouth, fall to the Ground; but as
 John 7. “*no Man ever spake like this Man,*” records them *all.* Each

Each of the Evangelists hath something *peculiar* to himself.—

Yet, as I intimated to you above, very observable it is, and much to be noticed, that in giving *this* USEFUL ADMONITION they ALL concur, and *with one Voice* propose the Pattern for your Imitation: From which Circumstance, it is natural to make *this* Inference, that so important a Lesson for your Conduct, (in the Observance of which the *Happiness* of human Life so very much *depends*) could not be too much *inculcated*.

And that it was for us Men, and our Instruction, that *HE* who (alone) could turn Stones into Bread, as well as Water into Wine, gave this Command—

(“ O ! that it was graven with an Iron Pen

“ and Lead in the Rock for ever”)

Job 19.

“ Gather up the Fragments that remain, that

“ nothing be lost.”

Ackworth, near Ferrybridge, Yorkshire,

December 16, 1762.

F I N I S.



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